

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 34-37 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the recited subject matter.

Please AMEND claims 26, 38 and 39, as follows. For the Examiner's convenience, all claims currently pending in this application have been reproduced below:

1-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) An exposure apparatus for exposing a substrate with a pattern of an original, said apparatus comprising:

a housing ~~filled with a predetermined ambience~~, for accommodating therein at least a portion of a light path of exposure light;

a reflecting member disposed in said housing; and

a laser interferometer having a light source and a light receiving element for receiving light from the light source after being reflected by said reflecting member, wherein at least one of the light source and the light receiving element is disposed outside said housing.

27. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising a projection lens for projecting the pattern of the original onto the substrate, wherein said housing is effective to close one of (i) a space below the projection lens and accommodating the substrate therein and (ii) a space above the projection lens and accommodating the original therein.

28. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising a pressure reducing mechanism for applying a vacuum to said housing.

29. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising a window provided at an interface between the inside and outside of said housing, for transmitting light from said laser interferometer therethrough.

30. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein an oxygen concentration in said housing is maintained at not greater than 10 ppm.

31. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising a gas introducing mechanism for introducing an inactive gas into said housing.

32. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein one of nitrogen and helium is introduced into said housing.

33. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein light to be used for the exposure is laser light having a wavelength not greater than 248 nm.

34-37. (Canceled)

38. (Currently Amended) A device manufacturing method, comprising the steps of:

exposing a substrate with a pattern of an original by use of an exposure apparatus;

and

developing the substrate after the exposure,

wherein the exposure apparatus includes (i) a housing ~~filled with a predetermined ambience~~, for accommodating therein at least a portion of a light path of exposure light, (ii) a reflecting member disposed in the housing, and (iii) a laser interferometer having a light source and a light receiving element for receiving light from the light source after being reflected by the reflecting member, and wherein at least one of the light source and the light receiving element is disposed outside the housing.

39. (Currently Amended) An exposure apparatus for exposing a substrate with a pattern of an original, said apparatus comprising:

a housing, ~~filled with a predetermined ambience~~ having a first space inside thereof, the first space being different from an atmospheric state ~~state, for accommodating therein at least a portion of a light path of exposure light~~; and

a detection system including (i) a light source, (ii) a light receiving element for receiving light from the light source, and (iii) an optical system for directing light from the light source to the light receiving element,

wherein a portion of a light path of said optical system is disposed in ~~[[a]]~~ the first space ~~enclosed by~~ inside said housing, at least one of the light source and the light receiving

element is disposed in a second space outside said housing, and the second space ~~is filled with a predetermined ambience~~ has an ambience being different from the atmospheric state.

40. (Previously Presented) An exposure apparatus for exposing a substrate with a pattern of an original, said apparatus comprising:

a housing, filled with a predetermined ambience, for accommodating therein at least a portion of a light path of exposure light; and

a detection system for executing focus adjustment of the substrate, wherein a portion of a light path of said detection system is disposed in said housing while at least a portion of the light path of said detection system including an electrical element thereof is disposed outside said housing.